Border trade through Nathu La

1530. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Nathu La route has been opened for border trade between India and China from September, 2005;

(b) if so, how far the timing to open this route is justified when the snow is expected to fall from November, 2005; and

(c) whether the Ministry has foreseen this eventuality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN):(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

India's trade with neighbouring countries

1531. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's trade with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand has risen to reach over $6.6 billion during 2004-05;

(b) the details of both imports into and exports from our country to the above countries; and

(c) the action plan to further boost exports from India to these countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN):(a) Yes Sir.

(b) The details are given below:

In US$ Million

Country	2003-2004		2004-2005	
	Export	Import	Export	Import
Bangladesh	1740.75	77.63	1586.18	54.88
Sri Lanka	1319.20	194.45	1353.75	364.25
Nepal	669.36	286.04	728.46	340.02
Bhutan	89.49	52.37	84.03	50.14

Country	2003-2004		2004-2005	
	Export	Import	Export	Import
Myanmar	89.64	409.01	109.73	397.07
Thailand	831.69	609.06	856.07	833.48
Total	4740.13	1628.56	4718.22	2039.84
Total trade	6368.69		6758.06	

Data Source: DGCI & S Kolkata (Supplied by NIC, DOC)

(c) For boosting exports from India to Myanmar, regular initiatives through various institutional mechanisms are being taken. As regards Thailand, negotiations are going on for establishing a Free Trade Agreement between India and Thailand.

With Bhutan and Sri Lanka we have free trade agreements. Bilateral trade between India and Nepal is regulated by Treaty of Trade between two countries. With Bangladesh we have a Trade Agreement.

Periodical meetings of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Working Group are held to address issues coming in the way of increasing bilateral trade between the two countries. Periodical meetings between India and Sri Lanka are held under Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to address issues with a view to further boost bilateral trade and investments. India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka are signatories to South Asian Free Trade Agreement which is scheduled to come into force from 1.1.2006. India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand are also members of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Free Trade Agreement which is in advance stage of negotiations.

The above measures are likely to further boost India's exports to the above countries in future.

Steps to help tobacco growers in sale of their produce

1532. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh have been requesting the